Leicester, August 27, 1854.

Dear Miss Estlin:

For the first time for many years, I am enjoying, with my wife and children, a short recreation in the country. We are on our way home from a visit to Connecticut, and are tarrying with our dearly beloved friends, Mr. and Mrs. May, in this very pleasant village.

Mr. May has kindly put into my hands the last letter received from you, in which was enclosed a letter (copied) from Mr. Chamerovzow, to yourself, in relation to what the latter deemed an unkind fling made by Mr. Pillsbury at himself personally, and at the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society as an association, in a letter published in the Liberator in June last. As you express a wish to hear what may be my view of the matter, in connection with the entire question of anti-slavery conciliation and co-operation, I improve a few moments to send you a few words on this subject.

Of Mr. Chamerovzow, I know nothing personally, and nothing to his disadvantage, excepting that he is the successor of Mr. John Scoble, who was the subtle and deadly enemy of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and who at all times seemed to receive the complete endorsement of the B. & F. A. S. Society, as its recognized Agent and official Secretary. Elected by the Committee of that Society to fill the situation made vacant by the resignation of such a determined foe, Mr. Chamerovzow must not be surprised to find that we are cautious in giving him our confidence and fellowship, and that we regard his election as at least exceedingly enigmatical, if not quite incomprehensible, as our professed friend and coadjutor, by a Committee so long, so bitterly, and so undisguisedly hostile to the American Anti-Slavery Society. Prima facie, it has a suspicious look; and where there is ground

for suspicion, there is necessarily an absence of entire trust. In the sincerity, integrity, and catholic spirit of Mr. C. towards us and our organization, you and your dear father (how inexpressibly dear in his present afflictive state!) express the utmost confidence; and, certainly, I should be wanting in justice and magnanimity, if I did not readily acknowledge that, since he has had the management of the Reporter, the organ of the B. & F. A. S. Society, has been characterized by a far better spirit towards us, as well as much greater ability, than formerly. Moreover, your concurrent opinions of Mr. C. impress me strongly and favorably. Nor, as yet, do I see any reason for doubting his sincere desire to see those variances which exist between the professed friends of the slave in England forever terminated, and a hearty union effected on a common basis. Still, avowedly, no change has taken place in the attitude of the B. & F. A. S. Society towards the American A. S. Society; and, at best, it occupies a negative, rather than a co-operative position.

Perhaps I ought to state, to remove any suspicion to the contrary, that no one, on your side of the Atlantic, has at any time, either directly or indirectly, tried to give my mind an unfriendly bias respecting the course pursued by Mr. Chamerovzow. Neither Mr. Thompson, nor Mr. Chesson, nor Mr. W. W. Brown, nor any other person, has communicated to me, nor to any one else in Boston, a single syllable ~~unfriendly~~ adverse to Mr. C.

As for the criticism, in Mr. Pillsbury's letter, upon the proceedings at the anniversary of the B. & F. A. S. Society, I published it in the Liberator, just as I publish every thing else contained in its columns, on the ground of free judgment and personal independence; and because, as it was Mr. P's real opinion, and as I thought it ~~contained~~ embodied a merited rebuke, it seemed to me proper to do so. If, in those proceedings, (as Mr. P. stated,) the very existence of the American Anti-Slavery Society was ignored, and no reference whatever was made to that Society even in the

annual Report, whilst the more superficial anti-slavery action in this country was carefully noticed, and the compromising actors were warmly eulogized, it was pertinent, and not personal, for Mr. Pillsbury to record the fact as palpably significant, and right for me to print it. Under such circumstances, how could Mr. P. regard it as specially complimentary to himself to be invited to speak on such an occasion? And was it not natural for him to say of Mr. Chamerovzow—"He seems not to understand that I belong to an anti-slavery movement and society which are utterly ignored, or remembered only to be reviled, by those who have made him their principal medium of communication"? Carefully adding, however—"I know nothing of him personally."

Mr. C. is comparatively young in the cause. He knows little of the animus, malignant and proscriptive in the highest degree, which actuated the B. & F. A. S. Society in reference to the American A. S. Society, and particularly in regard to myself, from the time of the sectarian secession from our ranks in 1840, till the day of the resignation of John Scoble, its Secretary; and, therefore, he is not qualified to sit in judgment upon us, or to ask us to change our policy. Indeed, policy is a word not known in our vocabulary. We resort to no tactics, we deal in no stratagems, we attempt to reconcile no antagonisms; but, with a platform free to all persons and all opinions, with an impartial and magnanimous press presenting every side of the question, and with minds ever open to conviction,—inexorable in our regard for principle, and uncompromising in our application of it to sects, parties, and institutions,—we leave affinities to find themselves by a natural law, indifferent whether praise or blame be our lot, letting consequences shape themselves as they may, and at all times endeavoring to remember those in bonds as being bound with them.

I will not doubt, for one moment, the catholic feelings and excellent intentions of Mr. C., in regard to "the old organization." But I will frankly say, that, in my judgment, he is lacking in moral discernment, and, as yet, only "sees men as trees walking"; that he is putting himself to a great deal of unnecessary trouble, anxiety, labor and expense, to effect an impossible fraternization; that, between straight-forward, radical, courageous abolitionists, whose position is higher than that of Church or State, and who make the deliverance of the slave paramount to all other questions, and round-about, compromising, timid friends of emancipation, who treat the subject sentimentally and act upon it spasmodically, there can be no real union of heart or will, no unity of purpose or action, no vital organization in common. "Let the dead bury their dead." Let the living press on to the mark of their high calling. Needless division sometimes there may be in the promotion of a good cause, and it is ever to be deplored; but that alienation is natural, which arises from a difference of spirit and principle, and can never be reconciled. The British and Foreign A. S. Society and the American A. S. Society have not been divided upon slight grounds; they have not misunderstood each other; they have no mutual concessions to make. The former is the aggressor, and utterly without excuse. The latter has never given any cause for distrust or ill-will, and yet it has been treated as ~~utterly~~ wholly untrustworthy and ~~despicable~~ beneath consideration. Nor is this to beg the question. Let Mr. C., or any one else, show, if he can, when or where we have been the assailants; in what particular we have been discontents or uncharitable; when we have exhibited a contentious spirit, except in defence of principle; or wherein we have evinced a lack of Christian magnanimity. We are branded as "infidels," because some in our ranks hold views objectionable on other subjects not connected with our cause, or because we are not willing to recognize a pro-slavery religion as genuine. We are denounced as "anarchists" or "disorganizers," because we are unwilling to sustain a government which is cemented with the blood of the slave.

And by whom, in this country? Not only by the bitterly pro-slavery party, but by many who claim to be the true friends of the slave. So it is in England. It is the element of religious sectarism which is at the bottom of all these variances, on both sides of the Atlantic, and it is useless to think of propitiating it.

In his letter to you, Mr. Chamerovzow speaks of such as you and your father "having more confidence in Anti-Slavery that is exclusively Garrisonian, than in Anti-Slavery which he (Mr. C.) regards as more particularly catholic." This shows that he is not yet with us, and that he does not yet understand us. How we can be more catholic, where there is no principle involved, than we now are, and have ever been, I am utterly at a loss to imagine. We require no other test of membership in our Society than an assent to the duty of immediate emancipation, and to the inherent sinfulness of slavery; we have no form of discipline or excommunication; our public meetings are as free to those who dissent from our course as to ourselves; our journals publish both sides of the Anti-Slavery question, and particularly the worst things that are said against us—and generally without comment. Indeed, the American A. S. Society has set an example of true catholicity without a parallel, and worthy of all imitation. It recognizes every form of anti-slavery at its true value, is ever ready to give credit to whom credit is due, and never refuses to co-operate with others where this is possible without sacrificing principle. But it believes in no half way measures; it is no respecter of persons, cliques, sects or parties; it places no reliance upon numbers, but only upon what is absolutely right; it has no policy; it regards as the highest expediency the sternest adherence to duty; and it is thoroughly in earnest.

My dear Miss Estlin, I do not think it is possible for our position and cause here, to be generally understood or appreciated on your side of the Atlantic. There is considerable anti-slavery sentiment in England, but it needs to be crystallized into principle. It must naturally and inevitably, by the force of elective affinity, side with what is simply emotional in feeling, and compromising or spasmodic in action, against slavery, in America, than with what is inflexible and radical. We must be content to be misunderstood, misrepresented, and unappreciated, excepting by the very few whose country is indeed the world, and whose countrymen are all mankind; whose religion is anti-sectarian, and ever progressive; and whose reverence for the right is paramount to all concern for the safety of the Church, or the permanence of the State. The motto of all such is, "Fiat justitia, ruat coelum." We shall gratefully appreciate whatever testimony may be borne in England against our dreadful slave system, and whatever aid may be extended to us, directly or indirectly; but we have no overtures to make, no compromises to suggest, no plans of conciliation to propose, no steps to retrace. Please say all this, for me, to Mr. Chamerovzow, in the spirit of brotherly kindness, and it may save him much unnecessary trouble, not to say deep regret and mortification at the failure of his attempt to unite what in the nature of things can never be reconciled.

And now, dear friend, (for whom I entertain the highest regard,) I have only room to thank you for the admirable letter I received from you some time since; to beg you to convey to your venerated father my warmest sympathies, and best wishes as to his health and happiness; and to assure you that no one more highly appreciates your labors than

Your admiring friend and faithful co-worker,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

Miss Mary Estlin.

MS.A.1.2 V.41 P.40